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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/992,799	11/14/2001	Satoshi Mizutani	2309/0K030	7337
7590 10/08/2003		EXAMINER		
DARBY & DARBY P.C.		SIMONE, CATHERINE A		
805 Third Avenue		ART UNIT		
New York, NY 10022		PAPER NUMBER		

1772

DATE MAILED: 10/08/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/992,799

Applicant(s)

MIZUTANI ET AL.

Examiner

Catherine Simone

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. **Claims 1-9** are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-8 of U.S. Patent No. 6,548,731. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims and the specification of U.S. Patent 6,548,731 are broad enough to encompass or include that which is recited in the present patent application.

Mizutani et al. (US 6,548,731) discloses an absorbent article comprising a topsheet (Fig. 2, #4), a backsheet (Fig. 2, #2) and an absorbent core (Fig. 2, #3) positioned between the topsheet and the backsheet, and having leakage-preventing side walls on a liquid-receiving side of the article (Fig. 2, #5), the leakage-preventing side walls extending in a longitudinal direction of the article and lying opposite one another in a width direction of the article. However, Mizutani et al. fails to disclose at least a liquid-receiving face of each leakage-preventing side

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wall being made of a fibrous sheet that contains hydrophobic fibers thermally bonded to one another and hydrophilic fibers shorter than the hydrophobic fibers, and at least a part of the hydrophilic fibers form aggregates which are dispersed in the fibrous sheet and are bonded to the hydrophobic fibers. Although, Mizutani et al. teaches a topsheet, which is also a liquid receiving face, containing hydrophobic fibers thermally bonded to one another and hydrophilic fibers shorter than the hydrophobic fibers, and at least a part of the hydrophilic fibers form aggregates which are dispersed in the topsheet and are bonded to the hydrophobic fibers (see claim 1, col. 10, lines 39-46). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the applicant's invention was made to have the liquid-receiving face of each leakage-preventing side wall in Mizutani et al. contain a fibrous sheet that contains hydrophobic fibers thermally bonded to one another and hydrophilic fibers shorter than the hydrophobic fibers, and at least a part of the hydrophilic fibers form aggregates which are dispersed in the fibrous sheet and are bonded to the hydrophobic fibers.

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Catherine Simone whose telephone number is (703)605-4297. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon can be reached on (703) 308-4251. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Catherine Simone
Examiner
Art Unit 1772
September 4, 2003



HAROLD PYON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
1772

9/29/03